

REQUEST FOR RESPONSE (RFR): MASSACHUSETTS AQUACULTURE GRANTS PROGRAM

CONTACT:

Scott J. Soares
Aquaculture Coordinator
MA Department of Food and Agriculture
100 Cambridge St. room 2103
Boston, Massachusetts 02202
(617) 727-9800 x238
(617) 727-7235 fax
ssoares@state.ma.us

RFR#:

AGR-AQUA298

CONTRACT TYPE:

Maximum Obligation

1. DESCRIPTION OR PURPOSE OF PROCUREMENT:

1.a. Introduction:

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture (Department) invites proposals to fund demonstration projects, feasibility analyses and applied research efforts that are responsive to the needs of the Massachusetts aquaculture industry and support the promotion of growth, diversification and continued development of the aquatic cultivation industry of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

1.b. Purpose:

The Massachusetts Aquaculture Grants Program (MAG) was created in response to the Commonwealth's interest in aquaculture development and the great need for diversification of fisheries and agricultural enterprises in Massachusetts. This program encourages environmentally responsible projects that can demonstrate public and industry benefit through work that will:

- result in the development and implementation of new technologies, products, processes or services;
- reduce aquaculture industry operating costs thereby increasing business profitability;
- increase the productivity of Massachusetts aquatic cultivation endeavors;
- preserve existing jobs and/or result in new employment opportunities for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

1.c. Eligibility:

The Massachusetts Aquaculture Grants Program is a competitive grants program that is open to any Massachusetts individual, company, organization or municipality which submits a proposal that meets the General Criteria for Funding.

Employees of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should contact the State Ethics Commission to insure that the intended involvement with the proposed project will not be in violation of applicable laws.

2. ACQUISITION METHOD:

Fee for services

3. NUMBER OF VENDORS REQUIRED:

Multiple

4. SINGLE OR MULTIPLE DEPARTMENT USERS:

Single. Only the Department of Food and Agriculture may contract under RFR# AGR-AQUA298.

5. ANTICIPATED CONTRACT DURATION INCLUDING RENEWAL OPTIONS:

Responses to this request must be received no later than 5:00 PM on November 7, 1997. Contracts will be awarded on or before Friday December 5, 1997. Contract duration will extend from the award date through June 30, 1998, with extensions available at the discretion of the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture only and subject to appropriation. The Department reserves the right to alter payment schedules that will be developed as part of the contract scope and performance specifications.

6. ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES, FUNDING OR COMPENSATION:

The Department will provide funding through this program as reimbursement for services that have been provided in accordance with payment schedules that will be developed relative to project task mile stones and project scope of services. The Department will consider special circumstances for advanced payment upon evidence of need and project characteristics.

A maximum of \$135,000 will be available through this program; \$50,000 from the Department aquaculture development budget; \$85,000 Sea Port Aquaculture Funding.

Maximum awards through this program will be no more than \$50,000 per project.

A match of 50% cash and/or in kind support from other sources is required.

No more than 20% of the requested amount can be used for overhead costs.

7. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR FUNDING AND PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS:

7.a. Successful proposals will support development and sustainability of the Massachusetts aquaculture industry.

Preference will be given to proposals that address the following:

- address the priority areas as identified annually by Massachusetts aquaculture industry members (See Attachment A: Annual Aquaculture Industry Priorities).
- seek to address recommendations put forward by the Massachusetts Aquaculture White Paper and Strategic Plan that have not already been implemented (See Attachment B: Aquaculture Strategic Plan Priorities).
- promote collaborative relationships and include active participation or demonstrate strong support of individuals, companies or organizations that are active members of the Massachusetts aquaculture industry (i.e. currently involved in an aquatic cultivation endeavor and in possession of appropriate local, state and federal permits for the aquaculture activity)
- able to demonstrate that Department assistance will permit leveraging of matching resources from private foundations, industry, individual donors and/or the Federal Government.
- projects proposed as research initiatives must have applicability to the Massachusetts aquaculture industry that can be measured in production, economic or environmental benefit.

7.b. Proposal Review and Selection Process:

General Review:

Proposals will be rated according to the following criteria:

- Effectively address a priority area as identified by the Massachusetts aquaculture industry
- Effectively address recommendations put forward by the Massachusetts Aquaculture White Paper and Strategic Plan that are yet to be implemented
- Evidence of aquaculture industry support
- Degree of collaboration
- Degree of innovation

- Experience and ability of the proposer and project staff to undertake proposed activity
- Benefit and potential economic impact to the aquaculture industry
- Proposed budget and matching contributions
- Proposals will be reviewed according to biological, economical and environmental feasibility by Commonwealth agency personnel

Technical Review:

- Proposals will be reviewed for technical feasibility and merit with the assistance of the USDA Regional Aquaculture Centers and appropriate national aquaculture organizations (e.g. Aquaculture Engineering Society, National Shellfisheries Association, American Fisheries Association)

8. CONTRACT AND PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATIONS:

Contractors shall adhere to the following terms and conditions:

- conduct demonstration projects, feasibility analyses or applied research efforts that are responsive to the needs of the Massachusetts aquaculture industry and support the promotion of growth, diversification and continued development of the aquatic cultivation industry of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as defined by the project scope of services.
- submit invoices for reimbursement that are consistent with the project mile stones and scope of services as detailed in project budget and project statement of work.
- submit a final report at the conclusion of the contract detailing project efforts, methods, products, outcomes and recommendations regarding future efforts related to the project's focus area.
- products/technologies/reports or other deliverables identified in the project scope of services, and paid for with contract funding, shall become public information at the conclusion of the project.

9. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES:

Proposal Format:

Proposals should be a maximum of 8 type written single sided pages, (not including resume and/or vitae attachments and appendices) using no less than 10pt font, formatted according to the following:

9.a. Cover sheet: (1 page)

Title of proposed project

Name and title of applicant(s)

Address, telephone number, fax and e-mail (if applicable) of applicant(s)

Total project cost

Amount of funding requested

Amount of match and type (i.e. cash, in-kind, other)

Begin and end dates of proposed project

Name , address, telephone, fax and E-mail of proposed project contact if other than applicant

9.b. Narrative Project Description: (no more than 5 pages)

Identification of need or opportunity:

Clearly and concisely state the specific priority issue, problem or opportunity that the proposed project will address. Reference the potential impact of the proposed activity on the economy and the Massachusetts aquaculture industry.

Project statement of work:

Fully describe the activities and work that will be done to address the previously identified specific priority issue, problem or opportunity. Format your response according to the following:

-How is the project designed and what work and specific activities will be undertaken in order to accomplish the project goals?

-What are the major products and deliverables that will result from the proposed projects work?

-When will the various work and specific activities associated with the proposed project take place (please provide a milestone chart that identifies the specific activities and work that will be accomplished for the proposed project)?

-Where will the proposed project take place and are appropriate facilities, permits and resources in place to carry out the work activities stated above?

Statement of public purpose:

Identify the expected public benefit of the proposed project. Indicate how the expected benefit of the proposed project will be conveyed to the public. (e.g. public access, public education, public use, etc.)

9.c. Project budget (1 page):

Submit detailed cost estimates identifying total project cost. Total project cost should be further defined as match and/or requested funds and categorized according to the following items: Salaries and Wages; Permanent Equipment; Expendable Supplies and Equipment; Travel; Publication and Documentation Costs; Other Costs.

- submit proof of expenditures for in-kind services that are consistent with the project statement of work.
- submit evidence of matching funds (cash and/or in-kind) that are equivalent to 50% of the total project cost.

9.d. Project management and responsibilities of key personnel (1 page):

Identify the projects key personnel, the specific responsibilities of all project participants and how the participation of identified project personnel will compliment the proposed project. Also indicate the projects management scheme and how individual tasks will combine to accomplish the goals and objectives of the overall project .

9.e. Attachments and Appendices:

Attachments and appendices should include resumes and/or vitae of project personnel that are no more than two pages in length and copies of relevant active permits for the proposed activities. Additional information is optional and will not be reviewed.

9.f. Submit Six(6) copies and the original to the program contact.

10. DEADLINE FOR RESPONSES:

Responses to this request must be sent to the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture, 100 Cambridge Street, Room 2103, Boston Massachusetts 02202, attention Scott J. Soares. Responses will be accepted up to 5:00 PM on Friday November 7, 1997. Responses must be mailed or hand carried. **Facsimile and other electronic transmission will not be acceptable methods for response submission.**

11. REQUEST FOR RESPONSE ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED:

Attachment A: Annual Aquaculture Industry Priorities

Attachment B: Aquaculture Strategic Plan Priorities

SAMPLE Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract Form

SAMPLE Commonwealth Terms and Conditions

SAMPLE Signature Verification Form

SAMPLE Mandatory Submission Form

NOTE: Selected contractors will be required to sign the Commonwealth's Standard Contract Forms.

12. NOTICE TO BIDDERS:

12.a. The Department will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm or

individual for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

12.b. Any applicant awarded a contract should be aware of the following:

The originals of all finished and unfinished documents, data, studies, reports, manuals, materials or other "deliverables" identified in the contract, and paid for with contract funds, shall become the property of the Department, and the Commonwealth shall have title and own the copyright in such "deliverables". "Deliverables" also includes any equipment or furnishings provided by the Department or purchased with contract funds.

The contractor shall have a royalty free non-exclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use these "deliverables". The contractor shall not make any application for patent or copyright of any "deliverables".

12.c. This RFR has been distributed electronically using the Comm-PASS system. It is the responsibility of every Bidder to check the Comm-PASS for any addenda or modifications to an RFR to which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodation to Bidders who fail to check for amended RFRs and submit inadequate or incorrect Responses. Potential Bidders are advised to check the "last change" field on the summary page of RFRs for which they intend to submit a response to ensure that they have the most recent RFR files.

Comm-PASS can be contacted through the following.

Telephone: 617 727-7500 ext.280

E-mail: Comm-PASS@MIS@PGS

Internet: www.comm-pass.com

12.d. Bidders may not alter the RFR language of and RFR component files. Bidders must respond in accordance with the RFR directions and complete only those sections which prompt the Bidder for response. Modifications to the body of this RFR, specifications, terms, and conditions, or change the intent of this RFR are prohibited. Any unauthorized modifications may disqualify a response.

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women-owned businesses, Minority-owned businesses, Veteran-owned businesses, and businesses owned by individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

Attachment A: Annual Aquaculture Industry Priorities

August 11, 1997 a correspondence was mailed to 293 individuals currently licensed to conduct aquatic cultivation activities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The 293 individuals, effectively representing the Massachusetts aquaculture industry, were solicited for industry concerns, issues and suggestions regarding industry needs that can be addressed through the Massachusetts Aquaculture Grants Program. Additionally, a letter was delivered and distributed to Massachusetts shellfish officers at the September 25, 1997 annual meeting of the Massachusetts Shellfish Officers Association to solicit further information regarding priorities associated

with shellfish aquaculture at the municipal level. The responses from these solicitations were synthesized and compiled and are listed below. Although no order of priority is implied by placement on the list, proposed projects that effectively address multiple priority areas will receive a more favorable review than proposals that address one priority area. In future years it is hoped that this solicitation could be made through an annual meeting of a trade association representative of the Massachusetts aquaculture industry.

Public education regarding shellfish aquaculture and environmental impacts (e.g. traveling slide show/lecture aimed at environmental and other impacts of shellfish aquaculture in Massachusetts)

Aquaculture demonstration projects that demonstrate methods and management strategies aimed at reducing production cost for aquaculture products.

Aquaculture demonstration projects that examine new/alternative aquaculture species development including growout methods and marketing.

Disease epidemiology, prevention and treatment for aquaculture species that are currently commercially cultivated in Massachusetts.

Aquaculture demonstration projects that increase availability and demonstrate methods for reliable sourcing of commercially cultivated juvenile molluscan shellfish (i.e. shellfish seed) for cultivation within the Commonwealth.

Attachment B: Aquaculture Strategic Plan Priorities

The Massachusetts Aquaculture White Paper and Strategic Plan was published in 1995 by the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Office as a result of a Gubernatorial directive through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. Through the work of three working groups that included more than 60 individuals, public and private institutions, 68 recommendations to improve aquaculture in Massachusetts were developed. The recommended activities listed below are the recommendations that can be addressed through this RFP process.

Recommendation #	Activity
51.	Develop a Massachusetts Grown Seal for Massachusetts aquaculture products that is consistent with existing Department of Food and Agriculture promotional materials.
53.	Conduct a study of agricultural cooperatives and how they could be applied to aquaculture in Massachusetts
54.	Develop a buyers guide to Massachusetts aquaculture products that can be put on-line and distributed broadly.